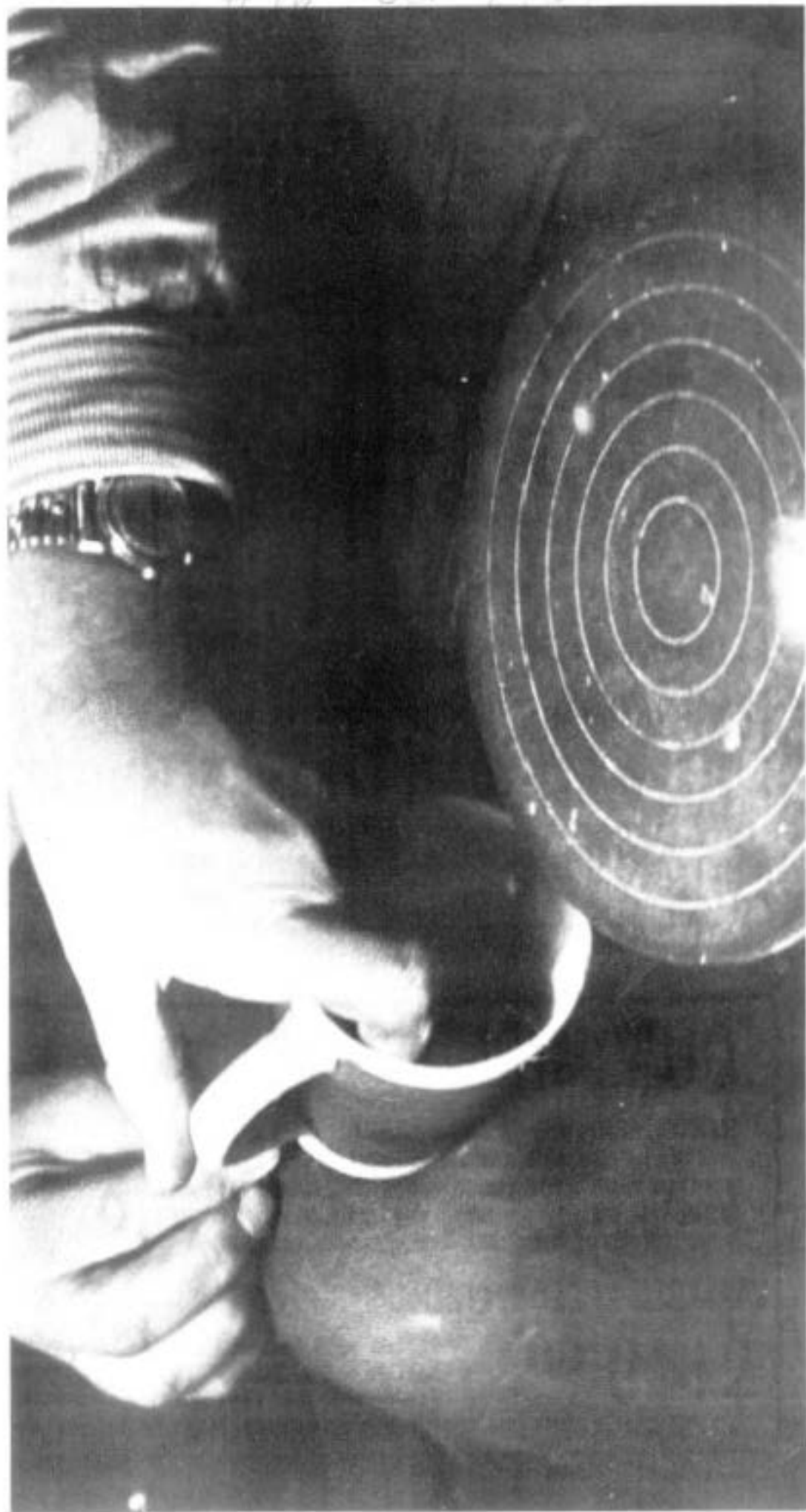


# WESTERN POTTER



## EDITORIAL

It is, I suppose, usual for new editors to question the underlying reasons for which their new charges exist. Why do we publish the Western Potter? Already there are two craft magazines in Canada - more in the States. One of the answers would be communication, an interest in and discussion of the problems that are common to potters in a scattered and enormous area. It's a valid answer - we do want to know what's going on, where we can study, what we can see. We do want to exchange ideas and thrash out problems.

But it is not a function we fill adequately. Communication is a two way thing. And at the moment all we seem to get back is an echo. There seems to be a reluctance to take a share in this dialogue; to question the opinions of contributors; to argue publicly and in print the issues we confront.

And this seems to me indicative of a general apathy in our craft in this area. Art of all sorts thrives in a welter of conflicting opinion, of differing aims and objectives where people, deeply committed to the philosophies they have forged, want to discuss them. We have fine, dedicated craftsmen in all areas of the Province but between us we seem to fail to generate the sense of excitement, the joy, the verve, the feeling that we are in the game because it is what we want to do most and we enjoy doing it - that we are totally committed.

The craft scene reflects this lack. Why should the Vancouver Art Gallery make Ceramics 69 - the major pottery show in Canada - subsidiary to an exhibition of Japanese art and technology? Because pottery is a second-class medium? Nonsense - if ever there was a division between the fine and the applied arts it has gone now in a welter of plastic, of film, of earth and self-destroying artifacts. If we potters insist on treating our art as second-rate then the attitude of the galleries, the collectors and the buyers will mirror back our attitude.

Let's stop selling clay short! It is a marvellous medium - versatile, serious, fun, co-operative, competitive, demanding. A splendid way to live. So let's drop the whole craft thing - further on in this issue we have a commentary on Craft Dimensions, Canada. For crying out loud what a title! Surely, we should take the craft part for granted?

Painters learn to put paint down - and that's a demanding craft.

Sculptors hack away at enormous chunks of granite. That's their craft.

But do we have exhibits called Craft Dimensions of Painting? Like hell we do. Listen to Henry Moore: "First the actual craftsmanship of painting. It's just commonsense. Anyone can learn it. But, of course, the craftsmanship is a very secondary thing. It's not the craft that's difficult, it's the mental grasp - the conception."

Let's stop hiding our light behind the bushel of the perfect teapot spout and let's turn our attention to the making of our craft the finest that is in it - and in us. Let's have the courage to know that if we want to do our thing we need superb technical abilities - and let's stop hiding behind that technique. What we need is not only good casseroles, we need great casseroles, the final casserole statement, the world's most original, most exciting, most voluptuous casseroles. And we need the other things too - clay that shouts with joy, clay that makes us laugh until we reel about, clay that makes us weep and clay that makes us throw up.

And if we can achieve that sort of excitement the Western Potter will arrive molten with opinions and arguments and conflicting ideas.

And that will be just great.

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## TAXATION AND THE CRAFTSMAN

A re-submission of the 1966 tax brief was made on January 24, 1969, to Mr. J. R. Brown, Asst. Deputy Minister of Finance. The submission was made by the Canadian Craftsmen Association Chairman, Jack Sures, together with Herman Voaden, President of the Canadian Guild of Crafts, Herbert Bunt, President of the Canadian Guild of Potters, and Gerald Corbeil and Jacques Garnier, members of the Executive of L'Association Professionnelle des Artisans du Quebec.

Some time ago, we learned that the earlier submission was not acted upon pending the conclusion of the Carter Commission on Taxation.

In the new submission, the inadequacy, inequity and antiquity of the regulations relating to craftsmen were again underscored.

The delegation received an intelligent and sympathetic hearing from Mr. Brown. However, since it was anticipated that there would be no national budget review prior to 1971, there was little hope for a quick solution.

Extracts From: "A Brief Dealing with the Inequities Inherent in the Federal Sales and Excise Taxes as they Apply to Craftsmen"

Addressed to: The Rt. Hon. F. E. Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada  
The Rt. Hon. E. Benson, Minister of Finance  
The Rt. Hon. J. P. Cote, Minister of National Revenue  
The Rt. Hon. G. Pelletier, Secretary of State

Presented to: Mr. J. R. Brown, Asst. Deputy Minister of Finance  
January 24, 1969, Ottawa, Canada.

By: Canadian Craftsmen's Association  
Canadian Guild of Potters  
Canadian Guild of Crafts

"This brief is concerned with correcting the inequities in the application of federal sales and excise taxes to which craftsmen are now liable because of a ruling of the Department of National Revenue classifying some artists as small manufacturers."

The submission is based upon three propositions:

- (1) That craftsmen work in bona fide forms of art and expression, but they are nevertheless discriminated against because their role as original creative artists has never been cogently stated.
- (2) That there is need to welcome and encourage all legitimate forms of art and artistic expression; that it is desirable to remove unfair

discrimination against those who make their livelihood (or a substantial part of it) by producing for sale objects of art, in media which are not traditional to the concept of art as defined in the Excise Tax Act. In short, it is desirable that the artist be not viewed as a person who uses only paint and canvas or stone and chisel. The concepts of art have now been broadened, as demonstrated in exhibitions undertaken by the National Gallery of Canada and other major Canadian galleries, so as to encompass all media and all forms.

(3) That it is not necessary that art be regarded as something divorced from utility. If an artistic creation is also a useful creation, it does not by that token lose its quality as a work of art.

The craftsman desires to be recognized as a person who works in a legitimate field of expression, and he desires to be given rights and privileges concomitant with those of the painter and sculptor. This recognition in turn embodies an understanding that the craftsman, along with the painter or sculptor, will be accorded exemption from the 12% sales tax and the 10% excise tax imposed on him at present by virtue of section 30 of the Excise Tax Act.

The Excise Tax Act does not take into account that the craftsman is at one and the same time a producer and a distributor. The sales and excise tax taken out of the gross sales price effectively destroys a profit margin which is vital to the craftsman. If these taxes are to be recovered by raising the sale price of the goods, this in turn affects their marketability, and the number of sales will obviously decline.

As well, the revenue derived from the tax on the products of the craftsman is small compared to the costs involved in supervision, regulation and collection. The Glassco Royal Commission Report on government organization states:

"Systems must be subjected to regular examination to ensure that the benefits derived from an operation bear a reasonable relation to its cost."

The three Associations, therefore, submit that imposition of the tax with respect to craftsmen, in addition to being obstructive and dis-

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couraging, is contrary to all traditional principles of taxation. And because the taxes levied are only against certain artists it is unfair and inequitable.

The solution to the problem is to exempt the Craftsman from the sales and excise taxes under the regulations by creating a new class of exemptions to craftsmen by means of a new sub-section. This new sub-section could be added to section 2 (4) and could read as follows:

"Craftsmen who produce goods, the distinguishing feature of which is that each piece is an original and distinctive article of hand craftsmanship."

The craftsmen of Canada ask that the Government recognize their role as artists; that it create an economic environment compatible with the needs of the artist, and that there be recognized by law the inherent differences between the aesthetic quality of the craftsman's original product and the output of the manufacturer's impersonal machine.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO ...

It is suggested that craftsmen write to their Members of Parliament seeking their support. The following draft may be helpful in composing your own letter which should be sent off immediately.

Member of Parliament for .....  
House of Commons, Ottawa.

Dear .....

I wish to indicate my full support for 'The Brief dealing with the Inequities Inherent in the Federal Sales and Excise Taxes as they apply to Craftsmen', presented to the Federal Government on January 24th, 1969, by the Canadian Craftsmen's Association, the Canadian Guild of Crafts, the Canadian Guild of Potters and L'Association Professionnelle des Artisans du Quebec.

(... over)

As the Member of Parliament representing my riding, I hope that you will do everything possible to ensure that the inequities indicated in the Brief are resolved to the satisfaction of the craftsmen of Canada.

signed . . . . .

## TAXATION AND THE CANADA COUNCIL

The Canada Council has recommended to the Federal Government and all the provincial governments that they alleviate the present tax burden on artists and arts organizations. In a brief made public Feb. 4th by Council Chairman Jean Martineau the Council proposed changes in laws governing income and sales taxes, import and succession duties, amusement and gift taxes. The Brief follows the Royal Commission on Taxation (Carter Report) in recommending that the right to average income over a five year period should be extended to all payers of income tax and that provisions for deductible expenses be extended to wage-earners. The Council adds that some artists are particularly entitled to these concessions because of radical fluctuations in their incomes and the very nature of their work.

At a news conference Mr. Martineau said that the Council "Brief on Taxation and the Arts" was prepared in answer to numerous requests from arts groups for a comprehensive and independent study to present their case to government. The Brief, prepared by a committee of the Council, is based on the findings of a Council-commissioned study conducted over a period of months by three experts, in consultation with a broad sector of the artistic community. The experts are Marcel Caron and Michael Mackenzie, respectively of the Montreal and Toronto offices of Clarkson, Gordon & Co., chartered accountants; and the Montreal lawyer, Philip Vineberg, Q.C. Both Mr. Caron and Mr. Vineberg are former presidents of the Canadian Tax Foundation.

A number of other recommendations are designed to encourage the donation of works of art to museums and galleries serving the public and to stimulate the commissioning or purchase of art by business firms and all gifts in kind.

In addition the Brief calls for:

- exemptions from federal and provincial sales taxes for artists, arts organizations and art-buyers;
- lifting of duties on works of art imported by Canadians and on arts materials imported by Canadian artists and arts organizations;
- amending provincial and federal succession duties and estate taxes to encourage bequests to charitable organizations;
- lifting amusement taxes on artistic performances subsidized by any level of government;
- a five year trial run of a scheme to provide income tax incentive for capital gifts to arts projects by allowing a special deduction from income of 150% of the amount given.

## THE BRIEF AND THE CANADIAN CONFERENCE OF THE ARTS

At the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Conference of the Arts, held in Montreal Jan. 27 and 28, the Canadian Craftsmen's Association requested the support of the Conference for the joint submission made by the various organizations on behalf of Canadian craftsmen. Chairman Jack Sures moved a resolution requesting their written support, however, an amendment to the resolution effectively shelved the issue until the Conference has had an opportunity to study the brief.

This is not the only time that the Canadian Conference of the Arts has done a disservice to craftsmen through their failure to support them.

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This article is reprinted from the Craftsman since it is felt that this is an area of wide interest and that craftsmen should be interested in supporting the brief.

Ed.

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Doris Shadbolt was unable to send us the Vancouver Art Gallery's point of view on Ceramics 69 but she is going to do so for the next issue.



## TWO VIEWS ON THE CRITIC'S ROLE

View One: Some Thoughts, after a Year, on Vancouver . . .

Sanctuary or Fool's Paradise? Charlotte Townsend.

There is a lot of artistic activity here, maybe more, both qualitatively and quantitatively than most places of this size in North America; but it is still indiscriminating and overrated.

At best, the atmosphere is authentic and independent, at worst lazy and self-satisfied. It is neither stimulating nor sophisticated.

Some aspects of all art have to do with the nature of society. The lesser the art the greater the connection. Investigating the social context in Vancouver isn't an irrelevancy. It also helps to preserve the critic's sanity in the absence of much Art-as-Art, (Ad Reinhardt).

(Asking, for example, why artists stay or come here, how they live, their history and economics, their outside contacts, their support and promotion, their attitude to Vancouver as environment etc. etc.)

I am sometimes dejected by this but it doesn't allow me to change my views on the responsibilities of a critic on a local paper. These are to cover, if not the entire art situation, then a fair and broad sampling of it, and to hope that it will be understood that the frame of reference must often be adjusted to deal with the different kinds of 'art' in question.

This is a compromise. I believe it to be inevitable on the job. I am also afraid that it may be a hopeless one.

Hope, insofar as I'd like to think of this kind of readership growing rather than being refined out of existence, lies in more straight reporting, interviews and verbatim accounts. But some sophistication is needed to arrive at this 'simple' way of looking at/interpreting art.

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View Two: The Role of the Critic . . . by Joan Lowndes.

The role of the art critic for a newspaper is primarily to create the art audience.

This truth was brought home to me about two years ago when I was able to visit in succession Paris, London and New York. The conservative Paris press, which rarely reproduces anything except flowers, portraits or landscapes, has bred a correspondingly conservative public. Young artists find their way barred because their work is not reviewed, and the Musee national d'art moderne on a Sunday afternoon is a desultory cavern.

In London, apart from the Guardian, newspapers likewise are more apt to photograph antique vases sold at Sotheby's than contemporary art. The space they allot to the latter is much less than to books, theatre or films. It is not surprising to find, as a corollary, that the London scene is precarious because it is not supported by English collectors. It must rely on the Americans and the Swiss.

In New York, however, the size and informed curiosity of the art audience is prodigious. It throngs the galleries and its members are prepared to buy. The fantastic interest in art evinced by everyone from cab drivers to Fifth Avenue connoisseurs has been promoted by the newspapers and by the coverage given in such mass circulation magazines as Time, Newsweek, Life and Look.

The newspaper critic is in the front line of battle. He must make up his mind quickly and pass on to readers the news of whether a show is worth seeing or not. His views affect attendance both in public and commercial galleries.

More important, he can open the way to greater enjoyment through greater understanding. Without being pompous, his role is educative in the widest sense. He must be interested in the flow of ideas - especially in this age of conceptual art - and able to express them in clear language accessible to the intelligent laymen.

This exposition without distorting over-simplification challenges all the skills of the writer. I am often asked if I paint myself. I reply

"no", I have no gift as a painter. I am a writer and in art I have found my subject.

The great pitfalls of newspaper writing are superficiality and arrogance of tone. The time for research and checking is short, as is the time for mulling over one's judgement.

But pitfalls also beset the art writer for glossy magazines. Addressing himself to an elitist minority of professionals, he can lapse into arid terminology and a scholarliness that verges on scholasticism.

I believe that writing on art should simply be good writing. The dictum of Boileau has never dated: what is clearly thought out can be clearly expressed.

I do not criticize by any rules. How foolish it would be to do "rules", a fixed stance, when everything in our space age is changing at an increasingly rapid rate. This in itself is the most difficult idea any writer on art has to put over. Because of the magico-religious origins of art, people cling to it as a constant amidst shifting values. Art to them is enshrined in palaces and churches and museums.

To think of it as a process going on all around them, like trees growing or silt building up in rivers, is profoundly disturbing. The most radical art of the present - non-permanent, non-precious and even at times non-visible, bewilders them and arouses their ever-latent suspicion that the artist is making a fool of them.

It is here that the critic must intervene as interpreter. I cannot do better on this score than to quote from Gregory Battcock's introduction to "The New Art": "Art is humanism and reality and, as such, cannot be seen accurately in terms of the past. At this point, responsible criticism becomes absolutely essential. The critic has, as it were, to paint the painting anew and make it more acceptable, less of the threat that it often is. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the art of our time simply could not exist without the efforts of the critic."

This estimate may be considered presumptuous by the artist who is, after all, the prime mover in the whole artistic process. As Gombrich puts it: "There is no such thing as art; there are only artists." The writer on art must maintain a sympathetic rapport with artists, so that he is open to their ideas.

Traditionalists are appalled by this incestuous cosiness, but if French critics in the 1870s had taken the trouble to talk to the Impressionists they might not have made so many wisecracks - and been so dead wrong.

Intentional criticism has been fostered not only by an awareness of past mistakes but by a new tool, the tape-recorder, plus the fact that more artists today are being formed by Fine Arts departments of universities, thus developing their articulateness.

But the critic should supply two-way feedback, relaying not only the artists' intentions to the public but conveying to the artist his own feelings and judgements.

It is the latter word that has become so controversial. Everyone detests making judgements. In truth they involve existentialist anguish. But to imagine one can avoid them is self-delusion. Critics, dealers, curators, editors of art magazines - all of whom, upon occasion, can function as jurors - are constantly exercising judgement, choosing the artists whose work they will review or exhibit, and out of that work selecting further what they think is best.

Such responsibility cannot always engender popularity. Artists whose work you praise will find it quite natural, those about whom you comment adversely will berate you as blind and brainless.

Only if an artist respects the good faith and perceptiveness of a critic can the delicate artist-critic relationship be maintained.

In the end the people for whom you write mostly, the non-specialized audience eager to know, are people whom you rarely meet. They do not write letters to the editor. Occasionally they approach you in a gallery and tell you they have enjoyed a show you have recommended or bought a paperback you suggested. But, like speakers on the

radio, you must have faith that they are there and hope that, by a kind of apostolate, criticism will eventually create a propitious climate for the visual arts.

Joan Lowndes

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## POTTERS GUILD MEETING September 18th.

We met in a new location, St. Paul's Church Hall, and gathered around a pleasant fire. Several owners of craft shops in Vancouver came and offered suggestions. Among the items frequently asked for were soup tureens and bowls, bookends, large ashtrays, hanging planters, salts and peppers, tiles and small sculptures.

Reg Dixon commented that a craftsman should make what he likes and eventually create a market for his work. The question of more colour in ware was also raised and that of the smooth finish of bases. Heated discussion on all these issues showed that we were in the realm of aesthetics versus practicalities and it was obvious that there were differences which each potter would have to resolve for himself.

The pros and cons of direct buying, consignment and discounts were also discussed. It might be worthwhile for the Potters' Guild to work out a policy in these matters and for all of us to use the policy in our business dealings.

Don Hutchinson talked about plans for Hycroft and ended with such a moving plea for help that he disappeared under an avalanche of eager helpers. The handsome posters have been silkscreened by members and are ready for distribution. For more on Hycroft see Don's report.

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\* \* \* \* \*  
\* If in the Okanagan, visit \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* KINGSMILL STUDIO \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* POTTERY \*  
\* \* \* \* \*  
\* 5 miles S. of Kelowna. Box 24, Okanagan Mission \*  
\* \* \* \* \*



## 5TH ANNUAL HYCROFT POTTERY SALE

This is going to be a sale with a difference! Yes, we will try and maintain our usual high quality of work and display as this is of prime importance. But we also want to emphasize the social aspects of our Guild. When this sale is completed we want to be able to say: "It was a great show and we made some new friends". We want involvement! We want imagination and ideas! We want enthusiasm! We want to have fun! This year the membership is doing the advertising, displays and selling the pottery. And the policies for the show have been set by the membership! We would like your help. Write to us or give us a call. It will be fun working with you.

Don Hutchinson  
8514 Ash St.  
Vancouver, B.C.  
325-8086

CO-ORDINATORS  
OF  
HYCROFT

Julie Cowie  
4169 W. 10th Ave.  
Vancouver 8, B.C.  
228-9176

Dates for the sale are:

6.00 - 10.00 p.m. Friday, November 21st  
10.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m. Saturday, November 22nd

The policies of this sale are different from other years. We have a larger number of exhibitors this year and we wish to avoid confusion and keep things running smoothly.

1. Entry fee this year is \$3.00, and must be received by our Treasurer by Nov. 14th. Entry fees and forms not received by that date means rejection of work.
2. The Potters' Guild will take a 25% commission on all pottery sold by Guild members. The Guild will take 40% from non-members.
3. Members who have not paid their membership dues by Nov. 14th will be treated as non-members and 40% commission deducted from their sales.
4. Each exhibitor allowed to enter 40 items. Sets are considered one item and will not be broken and sold as single items.
5. Listing forms will be sent to exhibitors when the entry form is received. The listing form will give time and places of delivery as well as requirements for marking names and prices on pots.

6. Exhibitors are asked to have one of the items marked as 'Exhibition Piece'. This item will be more critically juried than the rest of the show and, if chosen, will go into a special exhibition area. This piece must also be for sale.

7. Galleries or shops are allowed to enter only one person's work.

Don Hutchinson

(Entry form for Hycroft on last page)

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## WILLIAMS LAKE POTTERY WORKSHOP

Under the auspices of the B. C. Potters' Guild, a ten day workshop was held at Williams Lake during August.

Arrangements for the workshop were very capably handled by Mrs Anna Roberts and the enthusiastic group of potters in Williams Lake. A cottage near the lakeshore was made available and some ten assorted wheels were assembled.

Reg Dixon and Jack Wells conducted the first five days of the workshop, assisted by Ellen Chamberlin. Sessions were held afternoons and evenings and between fifteen and twenty persons were always present. Emphasis during the first session was on wheel work, simple glaze making and testing of over twenty different local clays. Discussion was very free and inevitably questions such as construction of an adequate wheel and a small kiln were dealt with from the practical view.

Reg had brought with him a small electric test kiln, and Jack had a propane gas burner to which the outdoor kiln was modified and very successfully fired. Cone 4 was the temperature chosen and most of the local red clays softened but china clays from Quesnel and a fire-clay from 100 Mile House are available for the development of a satisfactory body. Some of the red clays with 10-20% colemanite gave interesting slip glazes.

The emphasis, however, was not on results, but rather, that by understanding simple procedural methods and using available materials, an individual or group can themselves develop their own glazes and bodies.

During the second 5 days Byron Johnstadt and Charmian Johnson were the instructors. Demonstrations and instruction in wheel throwing were alternated with coil, slab and hand methods of forming pots. Examples of pots made in Vancouver were discussed and evaluated, and showings of slides demonstrated the possibilities of clay in the hands of different people and in other cultures.

Charmian gave classes for children in the mornings. The Raku firings and a visit to one of the clay deposits - making things out of handfuls of the raw clay - were the highlight of these sessions.

Altogether the workshop was a success - and the realization that making things out of clay and firing them is a simple process, certainly stimulated the imagination of those participating and opened new possibilities.

Personally I feel that the Potters' Guild should in future make one person responsible for choosing instructors at a workshop, so that they are not only mutually compatible but that their method and approach to problems be complementary.

Diversity is great, but not at the expense of continuity. Reg Dixon.

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## DISTRICT NEWS

### CARIBOO POTTERY SOCIETY

A 10-day workshop was held in August by the Cariboo Pottery Society, in conjunction with the Community Arts Council's Summer Arts Festival in Williams Lake. The main emphasis was on instruction on the wheel, kilns and the testing of local clays. The instructors for the first few days being Reg Dixon and Jack Wells, and for the latter, Charmian Johnson and Byron Johnstadt. We had some very exciting raku firings using local minerals, and everyone participating felt that they had gained a lot of knowledge and were stimulated to carry on with the testing of clay, and glaze materials. The Society is most grateful to the Potters' Guild for the opportunity to hold this workshop and for all their help and interest.

Pam Mahon

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### Workshops

1. L-R. Michael Melroche  
Hal Riegger, Rex  
Calhoun, Bob Kingsmill.
2. Reduction
3. Waiting for Miracles.
4. Frances Hatfield  
stoking "Longnose".



3.



4.



Hal Riegger, of California, lit a big fire of enthusiasm in the hearts of eighteen people during a week long Raku Session in the Okanagan in August.

The scene of this festivity, WindsWay Studio on Wood Lake seemed to lend itself to all the moods of the moment for people who had come in from such diverse points as Smithers, Nelson and Ladysmith, not to mention the goodly number of local participants. Three kilns were built, including one with the arch of the firing chamber built of the local clay, originally patted over a light metal form. After the first slow firing the metal was slipped out and the clay arch fired a little more through subsequent use and is still holding up, 2 months later. This particular twist encouraged one of the students to build a monumental mama at home, known as Mrs Ebo, the inner structure of firebrick but the firebox arch and all exterior surfaces built of the local clay. She is a gorgeous creation

Apart from the daily periods of actual experiment with clay in the Raku process, we enjoyed good discussion, slide and film showings, a beach party and swimming off the daily heat and grime. At the end of our session we had learned much about clay, glaze, fire and people and one could ask little more. And my "WindsWay" fulfilled a function dear to my own heart, to be a meeting and interaction point for people who make pots.

Frances Hatfield

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### Vancouver Island

What do some potters do when they are not potting? They dig - not in any flowerbed or veg. garden, but somewhere out in an uninhabited area where, with luck, some long-forgotten dump may be located, which, with even greater luck, will yield some interesting relic of the past.

A few preliminary preparations come in handy, such as a chat with an Old Timer to find out where settlements and encampments were once located. In our area this means gaining some knowledge of

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the progress of the railroad, mining, logging or fishing and some fascinating yarns provide a bonus. Once underway and a likely site has been found, some people spend hours reconnoitering and puzzling out the layout, all in the hope of pinpointing a dump and so saving time, or something. Others, more acutely bitten by the bug waste no time and start rooting with the ardour and proficiency of any wild boar.

Some sites prove to have belonged to a Tin Can group and digging is tiring, dirty and unrewarding. Other sites yield more interesting finds in the bottle line - and here one can launch into a vast collection, but the cream of the crop, for some of us, are those where pots also appear. A few finds like this and an interesting, if small, collection takes shape. Hand-made bottles, so dizzy in shape one almost gets the impression they have absorbed a large quantity of the spirits they once contained; crocks, so plain in shape and decoration they seem to reflect the austerity of pioneer times; soy sauce, ginger jars, wine flasks and storage pots made by craftsmen of a different culture - have a beauty and personality stamped on them forever by the fingermarks and careless haste of their makers.

Some articles are anonymous, posing such questions as to their origin, use and contents while others, although unsigned are easily identified. Still others are conveniently marked with such information as to the maker or contents - A bean pot with the bold red marking MEDALTA, or a rice wine bottle with the information that it was made by Komokyo in TIENTSIN, CHINA - The same rice wine in the same bottles are still for sale in stores today, although this one is at least 60 years old. The characters on a tiny crudely made bottle state its contents to have been - "A STRANGE WONDERFUL DRUG IN WATER" - opium or heroin in liquid form. Then there is the Oriental Dr. Chase who advertised on the side of an oddly shaped bottle Dandruff Drug - use for FOREIGN STYLE HAIR!

A collection of such articles not only provides interesting individual objects but also - viewed as a total - an insight into the way of life in any given community. For instance, in a European community, one could deduce that vast quantities of preserves were done by the ladies whose culinary efforts, over the years, were smothered in Ketsup; their children were saturated with 'Vicks' while the oldsters were

pickled in gallons of alcohol and comforted by almost as much bromo and milk of magnesia.

In an old Japanese settlement, life, despite its isolation and rugged industry must have been comfortable and full of sweet smells. A variety of essences were used both for cooking and medicinal purposes. All manner of skin creams, scents and lotions pampered both men and women. The Chinese areas are different again. Here one gets the impression of everything edible being drowned in soy sauce and to relieve the monotony a vast consumption of whisky and wine with a dash of opium.

One thing is sure - no history books or grandmas give such a lively and personal account of the good old days as do those hard earned bottles and pots.

Pam Hansen, Ladysmith

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## CRAFT DIMENSIONS CANADA

### RESUME OF JURORS

ROBERT TURNER, Associate Professor of Pottery and Sculpture at the State University of New York has shown his ceramic work in several international exhibitions held in Argentina, Czechoslovakia, Switzerland and France, winning silver medals at Cannes in 1955 and at Prague in 1962. He has had several one-man shows in the U.S. and is represented in the permanent collections of several American galleries and universities, including the Everson Museum in Syracuse and the Museum of Contemporary Crafts in New York City.

### STATEMENT on Craft Dimensions Canada

The work from across Canada which will be seen in this exhibition is impressive and exciting. Great variety was evident in most media entered and there are many individually compelling pieces. The jewellery selected was imaginative and authoritative in handling, the entries in plastics were few but strong visually and functionally, the burst of energy displayed in use of materials was especially

notable in fabrics, and I found this area lively, strong in design, color, skill. It is significant that a relatively large group of ceramics was selected, and there were a number of extremely fine pieces expressing a variety of directions in use of clay.

Since ceramics is my field, I should add my observation that there is a question or two about intention in some pieces; that the group as a whole is good, if not notably provocative in range of color and shape; perhaps inevitably a group appears quiet today which does not include the vibrant color, hard-edge painting, or pop art approach of current art fields beginning to dominate some ceramic shows. But there are here both the exquisite teapot and the intriguing slab structure, many pieces both functional and as objects in which imagination, skill and conviction are fused and which give proof of such diverse ceramics to be deeply gratifying. In fact, both the work and this exhibit are gratifying in terms of the future.

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## BRIEF REPORT ON THE NCECA CONFERENCE

NCECA!! What is it? The National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts.

The purpose as stated in the constitution: "is to stimulate, promote, and improve ceramic art, design, and craft by providing a forum for the exchange of thoughts and feelings about ceramics, gathering information vital to the artist and teacher, and by spreading this throughout the creative studies community."

Membership is open to artists, teachers and others who have demonstrated a concern for the ceramic arts. Annual dues, \$25, are payable by the time of registration for the conference. The conference carries a registration fee of \$10.

The 1969 conference was very well attended with an estimated 250 there for the entire program. The two main speakers were Daniel Rhodes and James Melchert. Mr. Rhodes directed his comments to ceramics whereas Mr. Melchert chose to try a multi-media presentation strongly slanted to the "police state" conditions in California institutions at that time.



My personal interest found the Rhodes lecture better suited to the conference and the large expense of attending but maybe I shouldn't be so narrow, expecting only information about ceramics at such a conference. Two panel discussions were held, one about the various fuels for firing the other concerned mainly with Mr. McKenzie trying to defend his "straight" approach to ceramics against a group of sculptors and potter-sculptors. This panel used the exhibit which was on display throughout the conference as the starting point for discussion.

One afternoon was devoted to lectures provided by the Atkins Museum. The museum worked closely with the conference providing not only these lectures but exhibits of their various collections of early pottery. These exhibits were quite wide in scope. The Kansas City Art Institute was close by and participants were able to tour the facilities and view the student exhibit which was held in connection with the conference.

The conference next year is scheduled for spring - dates unknown at this time. The location will be San Francisco. If anyone would like information please contact Jean Marie Weakland, Faculty of Education, U. B. C.

Jean Marie Weakland

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REPORT ON A Hal Riegger Raku Workshop  
from Rick and Pauline Hanbury.

### POTTERY VACATION

If you are a potter, whether deeply into ceramics or not, maybe you should give a thought a week or more of your summer vacation basking in clay, pots and fire in the quiet of some rural location with good food to be enjoyed after much work and fresh air. And, very important, the ingredient that makes pot trips - good fellowship from happy fellow potters.

Rick and I enjoyed all these things for one week this summer. It was held in Whonnock and was the most enjoyable and informative week of our summer (can't wait to do it again). The potters were from all



over - Rhode Island, Vancouver, Okanagan, Chicago, California, Haney. There were students, housewives, teachers and, well what can I say - a good cross-section of society all wanting to pot. The weather was superb - some of us camped in the meadow and others in motels. We ate our meals communally. The well got kind of low but nearby students hauled water and lent us their baths - which we needed, we did get dirty.

You see, Hal took us through the Raku process from beginning to end - we dug our clay from the creek and clay banks, we prepared it ourselves which led to some interesting methods - such as bare feet, - jumping on it, pounding with iron bars. One really learnt a lot about clay for one had to make it into a good body if one was going to make anything at all.

Hal in his quiet way taught us about Raku. Unless one is from the Orient one can't fully understand the philosophy; a North American should develop his own and perhaps adapt the two and be aware of both. Raku is relatively new in the West; in Japan it has been used in the tea ceremony for years. The craft has been passed down from father to son. Subtlety is the essence of Raku. To achieve this you must learn about self-control. If you have ever done Raku you will realize that to produce a piece that is subtle and delicate as well as strong in self-expression and character takes a combination of craftsmanship, control and mental attitude.

We not only made the traditional teabowl but also tiles and sculpture. We built three kilns. To do this we made excursions to the local brick factory for scrap brick and the auto junk yard for steel bars for the fireboxes. All kilns worked really well; they were top loading which called for a little singed hair.

The art of glazing and reducing the ware is where Rick and I gained the most information, for Hal's knowledge and experience in these matters is deep. We are very happy to have brought home with us so much knowledge and we are hoping to be capable of using it in our backyard - which is what makes Raku dear to us.

It is a beautiful way to learn pottery. We hope that more pottery workshops happen and that they are beautiful too.

FROM A LETTER      BILL NORMAN sent about his Canada  
Council supported tour of Potteries and  
Potters across Canada.

..... I think the most important thing I learned was the respect one must have for other potters and their work. I found several areas in Canada which felt they were the only ones doing anything and this disturbed me somewhat. Other than that, the trip was extremely enjoyable and I felt much better about my particular position in eastern Canada. When I left on my trip I felt I was the only one around that didn't have a fancy workshop, facilities etc. And when I found out that neither do 90% of the other potters in Canada I felt a good deal of encouragement.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

Re Hycroft: I'm going to stick my neck out, and there may be howls of protest which I can hear all the way up here, but do we have to have the Sale in Hycroft? Would it be possible to get a larger area somewhere else? Also, could something be done about those cedar shelves? They are overpowering, especially downstairs in that room at Hycroft; not everyone cares for the smell of cedar and I know of at least one person who is very allergic to cedar (not myself). Hemlock is out, I would say, as it is very heavy lumber, especially if it's green; western white spruce and poplar would be O.K. only there's the problem of resin popping up (or dripping down!) all over. Which pretty well leaves us with plywood. I know - I can hear it - plywood is out of keeping with the theme!! I do agree. The rough shelving is "right" with pottery. So where do we go from here?

Please do understand I'm not criticising - these are thoughts and ideas to be kicked around and discussed. It's a four-hour drive from here to Vancouver so I can't get pitching in to help, much as I'd like to.

Re communication: We who live quite a way out of Vancouver, lose out on a great deal because we don't know what's going on in the

24.

potting world - that is, until it's all over and we learn of it in the "Western Potter" or sometimes in the newspapers. This idea of David Lambert's is a dandy - a monthly Newsletter. Certainly would keep us in touch and help us feel we belonged. It was what I was going to suggest but he beat me to it - good for him. I know that it is almost impossible for a great many of our members to get to Vancouver to events or shows or pottery films etc.; say in the Okanagan or Cariboo and further north areas or Ocean Falls. The Club at the Falls is really isolated - there's a boat to there only once a week. To all of us I feel news of the Guild's doings (and proposed doings) would be appreciated, and the monthly newsletter would keep us more in touch. Anyone got any other ideas?

This seems like such a long letter and my thoughts are going faster than my typewriter - maybe I should try someone else's tip and give it a drink of beer!!!

Sincerely,

Betty Paterson (Mrs)

Box 674, 601 Cedar Cres., Ashcroft.

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July 25 (5 mos. to Christmas)

Dear Animal-raising, Coffee-drinking Editor:

Having just received my copy of The Western Potter, and read it through twice, I have had one or two thoughts that I will jot down (there are numerous appeals in your publication for members' opinions and suggestions) and if you think suitable you might mention them to the committee concerned at an executive meeting.

In "A Message from the President", re Ceramics '69, he suggests that exhibitions of this type are out-dated, and later proposes shows be arranged on an invitational basis ... he is sort of "thinking along" ... and I am wondering if we could not have a pre-viewing of the "ready-to-go" Hycroft Sale - most B.C. potters put their work in to it, don't they? ... by the Guild Members - each to be given a sheet of paper on which they list, after careful inspection, handling, admiring, criticising and scorning, which six (or more) potters they

would like to see invited to combine in a showing of their work. If this is pre-publicized among us, and we are committed to taking it seriously, it seems to me that the Committee in charge would come out with half-a-dozen of the most capable and imaginative potters - those who could really give us (and outsiders, too) something to really "feel" about ... not just, "yes ... that's nice, isn't it?" I know that a few of the "best" potters do not submit entries at Highcroft, but if they knew what was at stake, they probably would, and then that would be additional income for the Guild, too!

This next suggestion also relates to the Highcroft Sale. I realize it may have been tried and found unsatisfactory, but I make it anyhow forthwith. How about the south-west corner of the room being dedicated to the SALE of coffee and some donated bakemeats? Don't you think visitors would stay longer, and after chatting with friends over a cup of coffee would then decide to make another round, and purchase further? Certainly not free refreshments, but a smartly set-up booth (similar to the show structures) with several large urns of coffee - to be dispensed by a person in charge - no self-help, as this is a paying proposition. Loaned hand-made mugs, members own cakes, etc., and the only Guild output would be for coffee, cream and sugar. 10¢ a mug, and 10¢ apiece for any sort of cake or cookie. I am sure there would be no difficulty in finding volunteers to man the booth ... I would be glad to help! At both of the two Sales I have attended (and helped) it has seemed to me that there would be more "warmth" and relaxed atmosphere if coffee were added to the evening.

I might also mention that I was very happy to have had the Guild picnic here in June, and if you should wish to return another year, you are most welcome!

... Gillian ... you gave poor Warren MacKenzie a bad time in your article ... maybe we could assemble a group of mugs and invite him back for a "sex picking" contest!

Yours,

Iris Smith

## BRITISH COLUMBIA POTTERS

The B. C. Potters' Guild is a society of potters and ceramists throughout the Province, whose endeavour is:-

1. To join together in meetings and discussions for mutual advantage.
2. To promote exhibitions of members' work.
3. To collaborate with other groups of potters and other craftsmen.
4. To endeavour to continue improving the standards of ceramic work.
5. To carry on activities of an artistic, educational or social character for our members.
6. To publish a quarterly magazine, "The Western Potter".

Past activities have included annual demonstration type workshops by master craftsmen. Lectures and slide and film showings have been organized on a regular basis. For the past two years the Guild has published a quarterly magazine, "The Western Potter" with the object of educating and informing on matters of interest to potters.

Anyone interested in pottery and ceramics is invited to join the B. C. Potters' Guild.

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## HYCROFT SALE ENTRY FORM

I would like to enter the Hycroft Sale.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zone \_\_\_\_\_

Send this form and \$3.00 cheque made payable to:

The Treasurer of B. C. Potters' Guild  
Mrs Kathleen Hanchard  
2271 Bellevue Ave.  
West Vancouver, B. C.

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### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I would like to become a member of the B. C. Potters' Guild

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE \_\_\_\_\_

Send cheques plus exchange to Treasurer of the B. C. Potters' Guild:

Mrs Kathleen Hanchard  
2271 Bellevue Ave.  
West Vancouver, B. C.

(Membership Fees: \$5.00 ... Lower Mainland & Fraser Valley area.

\$3.00 ... Other areas)

### REMINDER!!

Membership fees are due for 1969

"The WESTERN POTTER" is published by the B. C. Potters' Guild quarterly. It is mailed to members free. Membership dues are \$5.00 per year for the Lower Mainland, Fraser Valley Area, and \$3.00 a year for other areas. Individual copies of "The WESTERN POTTER" can be purchased by members for 25¢ each. Advertising rates are \$10.00 per page, \$5.00 for half a page and \$2.50 for a quarter of a page. Wanted or For Sale ads with up to 20 words may be placed for a minimum charge of \$1.00. Ads with more than 20 words will cost 5¢ extra for each additional word.

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Note: Permission should be requested from the B. C. Potters' Guild to reprint any part of this publication.

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